FBI Officer Speaks at Law School, lists Food Not Bombs and Indymedia on "Terrorist Watch List"

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Food Not Bombs, Indymedia and the Communist Party of Texas on "Terrorist Watch List"

In a guest lecture at the University of Texas School of Law on Wednesday, FBI Supervisory Senior Resident Agent G. Charles Rasner listed Indymedia, Food Not Bombs, and the Communist Party of Texas as "Terrorist Watch" cause groups in Austin.

Rasner gave a presentation entitled "Counter-Terrorism Efforts in Texas" to a U.S. Law and National Security class at the Law School. He used PowerPoint slides to illustrate the nature of the terrorist threat in Central Texas. The word "Unclassified" appeared prominently in bold red letters on the opening PowerPoint slide.

Listing three categories of cause groups potentially linked to terrorist activity, Rasner named white supremacist groups, Islamic terrorist groups, and Anarchists. When asked what anarchist activity in Austin the FBI was investigating, Rasner referred the questioner to the Ted Kaczynski Unabomber case, claiming that Kaczynski "was an anarchist." He did not discuss Austin-specific anarchist activity when pressed.

Rasner used a map of Texas to illustrate the existence of the three kinds of terrorist groups in the state. Austin was listed as a site of all three kinds of terrorist activity.

Rasner then placed the FBI's Central Texas "Terrorist Watch List" on the screen. On a list of approximately ten groups, Food Not Bombs was listed seventh. Indymedia was listed tenth, with a reference specifically to IndyConference 2005. The Communist Party of Texas also made the list. Rasner explained that these groups could have links to terrorist activity. He noted that peaceful-sounding group names could cover more violent extremist tactics.

Food Not Bombs is an all-volunteer organization that recovers food that would otherwise be thrown out and serves vegetarian meals to the public at no cost. Austin Indymedia is an open newswire in which readers may publish news, events, and commentary.

In response to a questioner, Rasner stated that the FBI will attend activist group meetings whenever it suspects that the group might engage in illegal activity. He said that he saw no problem with an agent failing to represent himself as a representative of the FBI and implied that the practice was common.

Student Elizabeth Wagoner requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation at the end of the class. Rasner refused, claiming the presentation was private government property. He then refused a request for the contact information of the FOIA officer in his bureau, saying it "was not worth [his] time".

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation has been requested via the Freedom of Information Act. We will publish the presentation on Indymedia as soon as it becomes available.

austin.indymedia.org/newswire/display/26784/index.php

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